

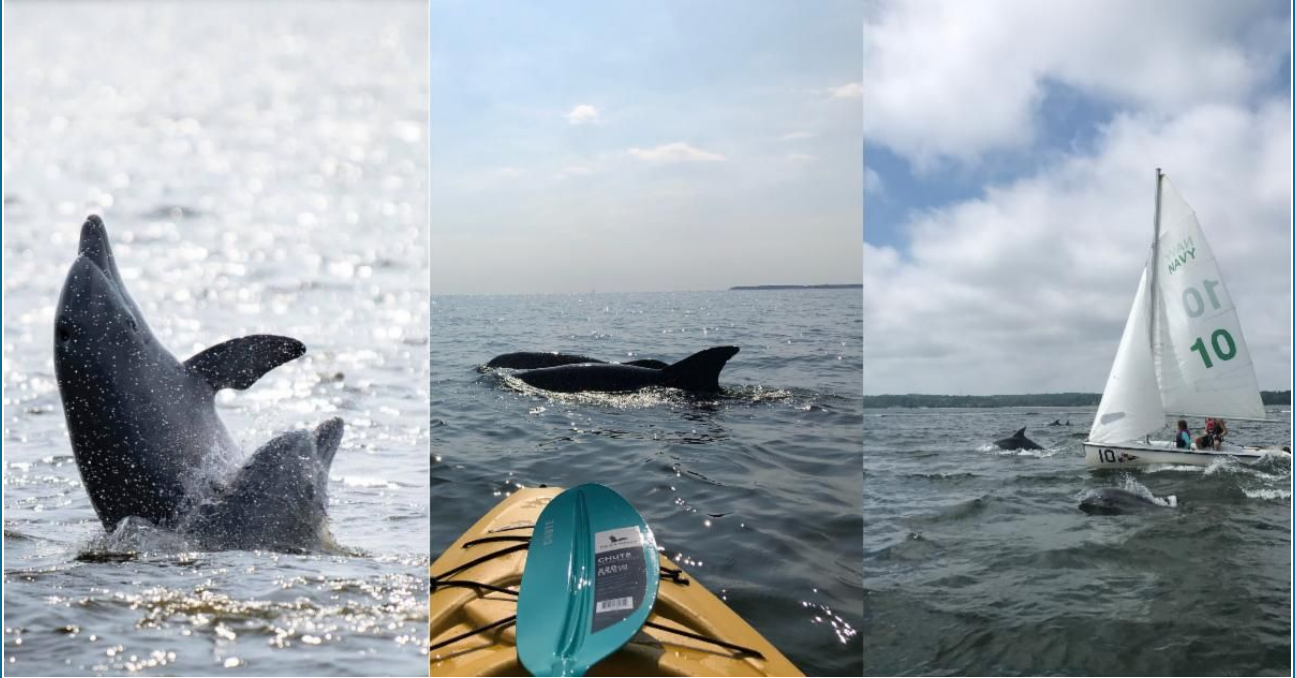
ENVIRONMENTAL INSIGHTS

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE



Chesapeake Bay health score held steady in 2020

The 2020 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Report Card issued by the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) gives the Chesapeake watershed a grade of B- for 2020. The Chesapeake Bay health score improved to a C in 2020. This year's report card has new indicators of watershed health, including stewardship, protected lands, walkability, and heat vulnerability. Individual indicators of Bay health had mixed results in 2020, but the overall Bay-wide trend continues to improve over time. In addition, 7 out of 15 regions showed significantly improving health trends. UMCES' Integration and Application Network produces the annual report card, which is the most comprehensive assessment of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. [MORE](#)



Dolphin spotters help scientists understand species in the Bay

Chesapeake Bay visitors have had the pleasure of spotting dolphins leaping out of the waters while enjoying activities the Bay has to offer. UMCES researchers created the Chesapeake DolphinWatch app to allow these Bay enjoyers to report their dolphin sightings, and a recent study used this data to understand the seasonal movements of this popular species.

“I started the Chesapeake DolphinWatch Project because we had received anecdotal sightings of dolphins in the Bay. We realized instead of just being occasional visitors, they were actually frequently in the Bay, and we wanted to find out where, when, how, and why are they coming into the Bay?” said Helen Bailey.

MORE

Smaller Chesapeake Bay dead zone forecast for second year

Researchers are forecasting, for the second year in a row, a smaller than average “dead zone” due to reduced river flows entering the Chesapeake Bay, as well as less nutrient and sediment pollution thanks to the management actions taken across the watershed to improve water quality.

The **dead zone** is an area of little to no oxygen that forms when excess nutrients, including both **nitrogen and phosphorus**, enter the water through polluted runoff and feed naturally-occurring algae. This drives the growth of **algae blooms**, which eventually die and decompose, removing



oxygen from the surrounding waters faster than it can be replenished. [MORE](#)

NOTABLE UMCES researchers Eric Davidson and Xin Zhang have been working with a team of scientists around the world to develop a sustainable agriculture matrix to help countries assess agricultural performance with economic, social and environmental indicators. Learn more about the project [HERE](#).



Community mural project spotlights Chesapeake

UMCES' Horn Point Laboratory scientists contributed their knowledge of the Eastern Shore environment to this 64-foot mural depicting wildlife on the Chesapeake Bay. It was dedicated atop the Chesapeake College on Maryland's Eastern Shore Cambridge Center in June. See the white dots? Those are silhouettes of copepods, dinoflagellates,

and ciliates, the basis of the marsh food web. Understanding these complex connections in the Chesapeake teaches us how all living things from plankton to humans are interdependent and help maintain a healthy ecosystem. [MORE](#)



Have We Made Progress Protecting the Chesapeake Bay?

Tune in with Senator Ben Cardin and UMCES Science Integrator Vanessa Vargas-Nguyen, Founder of Minorities in Aquaculture Imani Black, and Vice President for Science Application Bill Dennison for a discussion of the latest Chesapeake report card and the future of the health of this natural treasure. [WATCH](#)



UMCES IN THE NEWS

Dolphins in the Chesapeake are a sign of a healthy Bay! Download the Chesapeake

Dolphin Watch app to report your dolphin sightings and read more about the program in the Bay Journal article, "Dolphins 'all over the place' in the Bay Journal. [MORE](#)

A \$26 Billion Plan to Save the Houston Area From Rising Seas (Wired)

Chesapeake Bay Report Card: 'How Did We Wind Up Not Getting an A-Plus?' (Maryland Matters)

Three scholars win the new strategic award (Fulbright Finland news magazine)

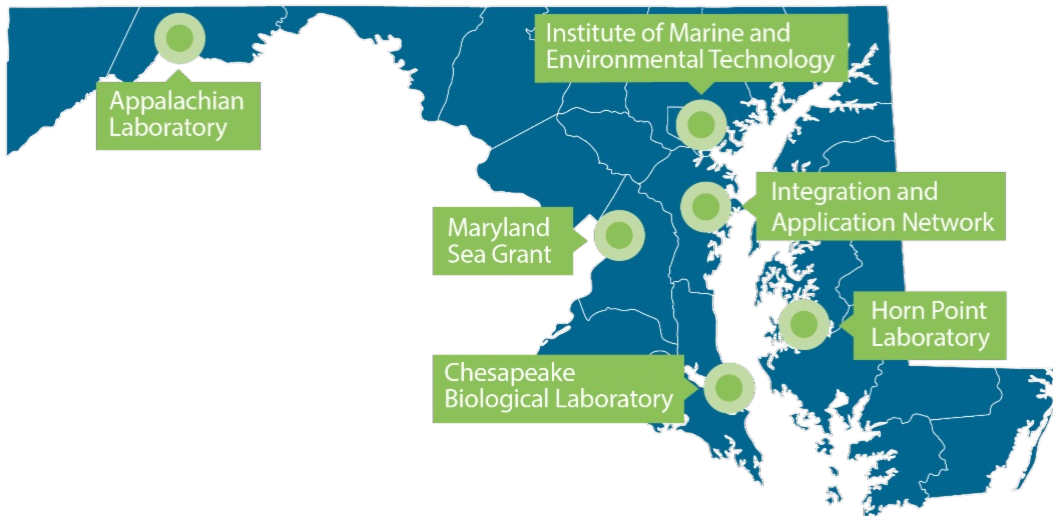
Expert Weighs In On How An Alligator Likely Survived For Years In Southern Maryland (The BayNet)

These Baltimore startups headed west for Techstars' latest Kansas City accelerator (Tehcnical.ly)

Setting the Record Straight on Carbon Dioxide (Chestertown Spy)

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